

George S. Nickerson, one of Nelly's sons, sitting in the cockpit of his BT-13 at the old airfield in North Eastham in the late 1940's or early 50's. George served in the Coast Guard during the Second World War and saw action in the South Pacific. Decorated for his distinguished battle record, he came home from the war excited about flying and determined to buy an old war surplus airplane. He did and here is a poem written by Nelly on May 8, 1947, after she had taken her first plane ride:



The dreary days were getting me down,
A whole week of clouds and rain.
It seemed as though the stars were weeping,
The sun would never shine again.

I went up to the local Airport,
Wondering if they were disgusted too,
To my surprise, my son greeted me,
"Come on up, Mom, for a wondrous view."

So I climbed into his B.T. - 13.
Fastened the earphones under my chin,
Fastened the belt around my waist,
Then the plexiglass cover, closed me in

Up, up, we soared, away on high,
Through clouds, black as night,
Till we reached fifteen hundred feet,
Then -- suddenly, burst into sight

The most wonderful, gorgeous picture,
No artist, ever, could make.
I stared, I gasped, mouth wide open,
Pinched myself to see if I were awake.

All clouds were gone. It was another world,
The sun, to the left, dazzlingly bright,
Shadow of the plane's wing, thrown onto
A vast field of blown cotton, to my right.

Did you ever go down, in the wintertime,
To see the snow-capped ice, in the bay,
With the sunset off in the distance?
Well, you can picture it also, that way.

It seemed as though I could step off the plane
And walk in that field so white,
I'm glad I didn't, because just then
My pilot said, "We're going down, sit tight."

I looked around and wondered how
He would know where to break through,
But soon descended a pocket through which
The ocean came into view

We shot right down into clouds again,
Turned around, wings on end,
Taxied down the broad runway,
Lo, -- my feet were on land, again.

I have tried hard to describe to you
About that trip, but it would seem,
There aren't words in any language
Could do it justice, -- it's like a dream.

Whenever skies are cloudy or
Your life seems all trouble and care,
Fly up, -- you'll find the sun
And "That Beautiful Land of Somewhere."



All photos courtesy of Mrs. Leland N. Williams, the former Shirley Nickerson and only daughter of George and Nelly Nickerson. They were found stashed in a drawer of what Nelly referred to as "Pa's old desk."
This material is part of a series being researched and written by members of the Eastham Bicentennial Commission. Anyone having old pictures, postcards, facts and stories about Eastham they would like to share, please write or call the Eastham Bicentennial Commission, Box 1776, Eastham, 02644 or 255-0222.